

REMARKS

Claims 24-41 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 21, 22 and 23 are cancelled, and claims 24, 25, 31 and 32 are amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

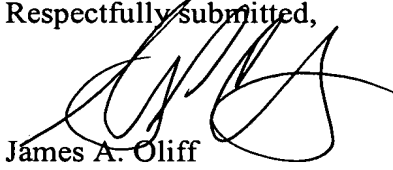
Applicants notes with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 24-39 and allowance of claims 40 and 41. By this Amendment, claims 24 and 31 are written in independent form. In addition, claims 25-30 are amended to depend from allowed claim 40, and claims 32-39 are amended to depend from allowed claim 41. As such, all of claims 24-41 are deemed allowable.

The Office Action rejects claims 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,280,253B1 to Kraus et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,285,011 to Shimochi. This rejection is moot since claims 21-23 are cancelled by this Amendment.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 24-41 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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